

CHARLES H. GRUBE  
Business Manager and Financial Secretary

SCOTT W. TOOT, President  
JAVIER SOTO, Recording Secretary

# International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers



January 26, 2021

750 SOUTH TUCSON BLVD.  
PHONE: (520) 622-6745  
FAX: (520) 882-5396  
Tucson, Arizona 85716-5623



The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas  
Office of the Executive Secretary  
MS 0525 Department of Homeland Security  
2707 Martin Luther King Jr Avenue SE  
Washington, D.C. 20528-0525

**RECEIVED**  
**By ESEC at 2:32 pm, Mar 02, 2021**

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you concerning the Presidential Action on January 20, 2021 with regards to the "Proclamation on the Termination of Emergency with Respect to the Southern Border of the United States and Redirection of Funds Diverted to Border Wall Construction".

We currently have 83 men and women, all Journeyman and Indentured Apprentices, manning the electrical and security installation at three projects parallel to the Southern Border of the United States. The Action by President Biden on January 20 to pause the construction of the wall projects has caused 83 hard working Union citizens to become unemployed. Their unemployment was not due to the completion of the project, as all construction employees expect, but due to the new administration's view of the project.

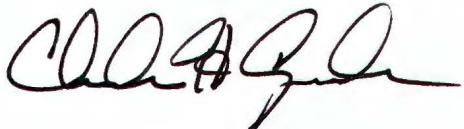
The physical wall is by all definitions, a massive disfigurement across our southern border, and an affront to our immigration policy. By allowing the steel wall to continue would be a disservice to the voters that sought the leadership of President Biden in November. Nonetheless, border security is and will continue to be in the forethoughts of the Americans that live and work in the border states.

By continuing, with minimal delay, the installation of the electronic security system (lighting, cameras and fiber detection systems) along the Southern Border, would move the previous President's 14<sup>th</sup> century immigration solution to a 21<sup>st</sup> century resolution. The electronic security system provides our Homeland Security Personnel tools to fight the tide of illegal contraband and unwelcome guests to the United States. While the electronic security system is being completed, the new administration will have the time needed to present a comprehensible immigration policy that provides effective and humane regulations for the immigration of non-citizens to the United states.

Your consideration to reinstate the installation of the electronic security system as quickly as possible, with minimal delay, would allow the dedicated workforce to continue their mission, ensuring the security of our nation.

Godspeed in your decision.

Sincerely,



Charles H. Grube  
Business Manager

/mg



opeiu: 30  
afl-cio  
Tucson, AZ



**VIVIAN MORENO**  
COUNCILMEMBER, EIGHTH DISTRICT  
CITY OF SAN DIEGO

March 10, 2021

The Honorable Alejandro N. Mayorkas  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
3801 Nebraska Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20528

**RE: Proclamation on the Termination of Emergency with Respect to The Southern Border of The United States and Redirection of Funds Diverted to Border Wall Construction**

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

On January 20, 2021, President Biden issued Proclamation 10142 which paused all border wall projects along the United States-Mexico border for 60 days and directed federal agencies to develop a plan to redirect funds concerning the southern border wall. This presidential action affected two border wall projects within my Council District in the City of San Diego; the United States Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) Tijuana River Border Wall System Project and an unnamed wall replacement project located at Friendship Park atop Monument Mesa, overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

As President Biden stated in Proclamation 10142, building a massive wall is not a serious policy solution and is a waste of American taxpayer dollars that diverts attention away from genuine threats to our homeland security. This is especially true for the projects mentioned above.

The Tijuana River Border Wall System Project announced on August 26, 2020, would serve no public purpose, and would impose significant environmental and quality of life impacts on the Tijuana River Valley and the surrounding communities. The Secure Fencing Act of 2006 authorized the construction of a barrier throughout this sector, making an additional barrier entirely superfluous. There are several concerns with constructing a new barrier that will impede the hydrological flow in the Tijuana River, and these concerns have not been addressed due to the waiving of more than 49 laws, such as the Clean Water Act and the Clean Air Act permitted by previous administration's actions.

The Border Wall Project located at Friendship Park has similar shortcomings, as it would threaten the Friendship Park's existence and would incur a significant financial burden to taxpayers with its unknown costs. Friendship Park, established in 1971 by First Lady Pat Nixon, has served as a binational meeting place for over 50 years for friends and family who legally cannot be together in either country. In 2019, over 2,300 families entered this shared space to connect with their loved ones. Multiple secure fences are already located at Friendship Park, and there seems to be no real purpose for this wall replacement project other than the destruction of Friendship Park itself.

There is no legitimate reason as to why the United States should not permit a binational park on our southern border when similar parks operated by the CBP already exist along the United States-Canada border, such as the Peace Arch Park in Blaine, Washington and the International Peace Garden near Kelvin, North Dakota.

Friendship Park is also home to the Binational Garden which consists of native flora, including the *Plantago Erecta*, a plant that attracts the endangered Quino Checkerspot Butterfly. Friendship Park serves as a reminder of the shared destiny between the people of San Diego and Tijuana based on historical, cultural, economic and social relationships that transcend the border.

Due to the significant and severe environmental, cultural and financial concerns with constructing the border barriers at these two locations, I respectfully request that the contracts for the Tijuana River Border Wall System Project and the border replacement project located at Friendship Park be permanently terminated. The funds allocated to these border wall projects should instead be spent on addressing the ongoing and very real crisis- of the flows of sewage, solid waste and toxic sediment which has caused an environmental disaster harming the unique flora and fauna in the Tijuana River Valley, and put public health at risk for over five decades. CBP agents who have been exposed to the contaminants in these areas have reported headaches, skin rashes and respiratory issues.

On August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Friendship Park will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. I would like to extend an invitation to you and your staff to come visit the Tijuana River Valley and Friendship Park in San Diego, so you can see and hear the importance of these valuable landmarks.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (619) 236-6688 or [VivianMoreno@sandiego.gov](mailto:VivianMoreno@sandiego.gov) if you wish to discuss this matter further or need any assistance.

Sincerely,



Councilmember Moreno  
City of San Diego, Eighth District

COMMITTEE ON  
APPROPRIATIONS  
SUBCOMMITTEES:  
DEFENSE  
HOMELAND SECURITY, VICE CHAIR  
AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT,  
FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION,  
AND RELATED AGENCIES

**HENRY CUELLAR, PH.D.**  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

WASHINGTON OFFICE  
2372 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
PHONE: (202) 225-1640  
FAX: (202) 225-1641

[cuellar.house.gov](mailto:cuellar.house.gov)  
DEMOCRATIC STEERINO AND  
POLICY COMMITTEE  
CHIEF DEPUTY WHIP  
U.S.-MEXICO INTERPARLIAMENTARY  
GROUP CHAIRMAN

March 31, 2021

Alejandro Mayorkas  
Secretary of Homeland Security  
Department of Homeland Security  
2707 Martin Luther King Jr Ave SE  
Washington, DC 20528-0525

**RECEIVED**

**By ESEC at 10:54 am, Apr 01, 2021**

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

In December, I wrote a letter to President-elect Biden, urging his administration to rescind the national emergency declaration and reprogrammed funding; direct the Department of Justice to dismiss all condemnation suits; terminate for convenience all current and pending Army Corps of Engineer contracts; and rescind Homeland Security waiver authority relating to the construction of new border barriers.

I was encouraged to see his administration begin to act in accordance with my letter by issuing the Proclamation on the Termination of Emergency with Respect to the Southern Border of the United States and Redirection of Funds Diverted to Border Wall Construction on January 20, 2021 (hereinafter “Proclamation”). Through the Proclamation, President Joseph R. Biden has directed, *inter alia*, a pause on “each construction project on the southern border wall,” a pause on the obligation of funds relating to the project, and assessments of various aspects of the border wall project. Nonetheless, the Proclamation left open the possibility that some aspects of the project may resume.

The Proclamation orders “within 60 days from the date of this proclamation … the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Homeland Security, in coordination with the Secretary of the Treasury, the Attorney General, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and the heads of any other appropriate executive departments and agencies, and in consultation with the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, shall develop a plan for the redirection of funds concerning the southern border wall, as appropriate and consistent with applicable law.”

March 20, 2021 was the deadline for developing the plan for the redirection of border wall funds. Once the plan is developed, the Proclamation directs the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Homeland Security to take all appropriate steps to resume, modify, or terminate projects and to otherwise implement the plan. To date, you have not shed light on the future of border wall projects. As a result, the Department of Justice is continuing to pursue condemnation actions against my constituents.

In light of the Proclamation, I am requesting that you immediately work with the U.S. Attorney General to provide guidance to the United States Attorney, Southern District of Texas to cancel all eminent domain lawsuits and forego any claims for taking for the purpose of building fencing

or border wall systems. Without a clear directive, the Department of Justice will continue to pursue these destructive acts towards our border communities. It is time we restore private property rights to the people of South Texas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Henry Cuellar".

Henry Cuellar  
Member of Congress  
28<sup>th</sup> District of Texas

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, DC 20006

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas  
Secretary  
United States Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

March 3, 2021

**RECEIVED**  
**By ESEC at 11:28 am, Oct 14, 2021**

Dear President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas,

As Members of Congress who represent districts along our country's southern border, we have witnessed firsthand the devastating impacts of border wall construction on the environment and wildlife, border communities, and Native American sacred sites. We applaud your decision to take swift action to halt all border wall construction and direct the Department of Homeland Security and Department of Defense to spearhead the development of the "Plan for Redirecting Funding and Repurposing Contracts" within 60 days. As you develop a plan to redirect funding, repurpose contracts, and restore the land damaged by the border wall construction, we urge you to meaningfully consult with border communities that have been impacted by the construction, including tribal members, and stakeholders. We ask that the Department of Homeland Security:

- Develop a meaningful environmental mitigation plan for the borderlands with local stakeholders.
- Immediately cancel all border wall contracts and commit to not initiate new contracts or resume any construction activities.
- Divert remaining funds to other purposes, including mitigating harms from the wall and removing border wall in places with particularly destructive environmental damage and destruction of sacred sites.

Additionally, we are concerned with reports of current border wall construction in the Pajarito Mountains in Arizona. We respectfully request details and reports on existing border wall construction and the status of these contracts. Border wall construction has inflicted incalculable and irreparable environmental, economic, and social consequences on our borderlands. To expedite border wall construction, President Trump's Secretary of Homeland Security blatantly abused its sweeping authority under the Real ID Act of 2005 to waive all laws and legal requirements standing in the way of border wall construction. The Trump administration used it 29 times to waive 84 federal laws and countless state and local laws. These laws included critical environmental protections, like the National Environmental Policy Act, public health and safety rights, and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. The full extent of the damage is therefore unknown. We urge you to rescind this harmful waiver entirely to prevent future abuse of power at the expense of our communities. The use of the Section 102 waiver to build the wall defies all our democratic values and immediate action should be taken to restore public participation in policy decisions along the border.

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

Local and tribal communities were left out of the conversation entirely when the decision to build a wall along the southern border was made in the first place. The same communities were excluded when President Trump and his predecessors hastily built the poorly designed structure that exists today. Despite our opposition to the construction, we repeatedly requested DHS engage with us to introduce local experts and stakeholders to help inform them of susceptible areas. Unsurprisingly, the Trump Administration ignored these requests.

Urgent action is necessary to address the damage to border communities, public lands, lands sacred to the O'odham, Carrizo-Comecrudo and Kumeyaay people, and the environment along the border. We look forward to working with your administration on developing long-term environmental mitigation and restoration strategies to help renew our borderlands.

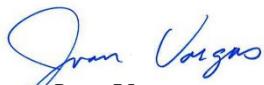
Sincerely,



Ann Kirkpatrick  
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas  
Member of Congress



Mike Levin  
Member of Congress



Filemon Vela  
Member of Congress



Scott Peters  
Member of Congress



Teresa Leger Fernández  
Member of Congress



Veronica Escobar  
Member of Congress

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

## COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051

MINORITY (202) 225-5074

<https://oversight.house.gov>

February 4, 2021

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

**RECEIVED***By ESEC External at 9:11 am, Feb 04, 2021*

Dear Secretary Mayorkas,

We are conducting oversight of President Biden’s use of executive action to stop construction of the border wall and how this decision impacts the duty of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to protect our border. This potentially dangerous action not only harms our national security and thwarts the will of Congress, but also leaves American citizens living near the southwest border vulnerable to activities involving cartels and smugglers.

Since taking office, President Biden has used an unprecedented number of executive actions to bypass Congress.<sup>1</sup> On the day he was inaugurated, President Biden signed a proclamation stopping construction of the border wall for 60 days.<sup>2</sup> This is particularly concerning since Congress agreed in December 2020 that \$1,375,000,000 be appropriated “for the construction of [a] barrier system along the southwest border.”<sup>3</sup> In fact, every year since Fiscal Year 2018, Congress has provided funds for barriers and fencing along the southwest border, clearly signaling Congress’s intent to secure the border with a physical barrier.<sup>4</sup> The Government Accountability Office has concluded that, “Faithful execution of the law does not permit the president to substitute his own policy priorities for those that Congress has enacted

<sup>1</sup> See Aamer Madhani, *Biden Faces Scrutiny Over Reliance on Executive Orders*, ASSOCIATED PRESS, Jan. 28, 2021, available at <https://apnews.com/article/joe-biden-donald-trump-coronavirus-pandemic-immigration-environment-f5c48846c6db54ec0ddff0f3f62485b1e>.

<sup>2</sup> Proclamation by the President, *Emergency With Respect to the Southern Border of the United States And Redirection of Funds Diverted to Border Wall Construction*, Jan. 20, 2021, available at [www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/20/proclamation-termination-of-emergency-with-respect-to-southern-border-of-united-states-and-redirection-of-funds-diverted-to-border-wall-construction/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/20/proclamation-termination-of-emergency-with-respect-to-southern-border-of-united-states-and-redirection-of-funds-diverted-to-border-wall-construction/)

<sup>3</sup> See Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, Public Law No. 116-260, p. 275-76, Dec. 27, 2020, available at <https://www.congress.gov/116/bills/hr133/BILLS-116hr133enr.pdf> (“... An amount equal to the amount made available in section 209(a)(1) of division D of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020...); see also Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020, Public Law No: 116-93, Div. D, Sec. 209(a)(1), Dec. 16, 2019, available at <https://www.congress.gov/116/plaws/publ93/PLAW-116publ93.pdf>. (“\$1,375,000,000 for the construction of barrier system along the southwest border...”).

<sup>4</sup> See CRS, *DHS Border Barrier Funding*, Jan. 29, 2020, available at <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R45888>.

into law.”<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately, in this case, President Biden has decided to use executive action to disregard the law passed by Congress and signed by President Trump.

The decision to pause border wall construction is particularly confounding given President Biden’s past support for the Secure Fence Act of 2006.<sup>6</sup> Then-Senator Biden stated that the border fence would prevent “tons” of drugs from entering the country.<sup>7</sup> This view is consistent with recent DHS findings. In October 2020, DHS stated that border barriers have “proved to be a critical component in gaining operational control of the border.”<sup>8</sup> In many areas where the wall was constructed it resulted in a significant decrease in illegal entry while also saving taxpayer money by requiring less manpower.<sup>9</sup>

American citizens on the border have experienced firsthand the dangers posed by the lack of adequate physical barriers along the border. We have heard many accounts of those whose safety and security have been directly affected by the lack of a physical barrier. In one of many examples, a rancher and constituent of new Committee Member Representative Herrell, along the border in New Mexico, explained how an incomplete wall along his property has effectively become a funnel for thousands of migrants and smugglers. This has led to people crossing through his land, killing and stealing his livestock, and in one instance holding him at gunpoint and stealing his truck. Similar accounts from others who live in our border communities are unsettling and unacceptable.

In the wake of the Biden Administration’s decision to lighten border security and propose amnesty for illegal immigrants, numbers of illegal southern border crossings are steadily increasing.<sup>10</sup> One media report found that, “smugglers are using Biden’s promises to restart asylum, legalize illegal immigrants and stop enforcement by Immigration and Customs Enforcement to encourage migrants to make the journey.”<sup>11</sup> This raises serious concerns about how the Biden Administration intends to secure the border, particularly since it decided to pause wall construction and divert the funds elsewhere.

In order for Committee Republicans to better understand the Biden Administration’s border security policies, please provide the following documents and information as soon as possible but no later than February 18, 2021:

1. All documents and communications related to President Biden’s decision to halt construction of the border wall for 60 days.

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<sup>5</sup> Letter from General Counsel, GAO, to OMB, Jan. 16, 2020, p.1, available at <https://www.gao.gov/assets/710/703909.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> See Andrew Kaczynski, *Joe Biden Once Said a Fence was Needed to Stop ‘Tons’ of drugs from Mexico*, CNN, May 10, 2019, available at <https://www.cnn.com/2019/05/10/politics/kfile-biden-drugs-fence-2006/index.html>

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> Press Release, DHS, *The Border Wall System is Deployed, Effective, and Disrupting Criminals and Smugglers*, Oct. 29, 2020, available at <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2020/10/29/border-wall-system-deployed-effective-and-disrupting-criminals-and-smugglers#:~:text=CBP%20has%20seen%2079%25%20decrease,wall%20system%20in%20this%20area>.

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*

<sup>10</sup> See Adam Shaw & William La Jeunesse, *Migrant Numbers Increase Along US-Mexico Border as They Await Biden’s Immigration Action*, FOX NEWS, Feb. 2, 2021, available at <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/migrant-numbers-us-mexico-border-bidens-immigration-action>.

<sup>11</sup> *Id.*

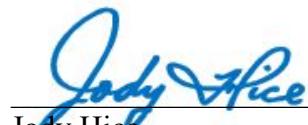
2. All documents and communications related to the \$1.3 billion in funds specifically appropriated for construction of the border wall including but not limited to any repurposing of these funds.
3. All documents and communications related to the Department of Homeland Security's plan to ensure effective border security and safety of Americans living in border regions, particularly in those areas where construction of physical barriers was halted, including what additional resources will be necessary due to the halt in construction.
4. All documents sufficient to show a full accounting of funds appropriated to the Department of Homeland Security for the "construction of barrier system along the southwest border" for FY2018, FY2019, FY2020, and FY2021, including funds obligated, where and how they were obligated, and what appropriated money remains to be obligated.
5. All documents and communications from January 20, 2021 to present related to any of the following along the southwestern border: a) increased illegal entries, b) drug trafficking, c) firearms trafficking, d) violent incidents involving American citizens.

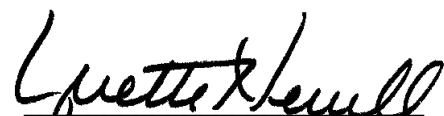
In addition, please make arrangements to schedule the briefing on these matters no later than February 11, 2021. To schedule the briefing or ask any follow-up or related questions, please contact Committee on Oversight and Reform Republican staff at (202) 225-5074.

The Committee on Oversight and Reform is the principal oversight committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time" under House Rule X. Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this inquiry.

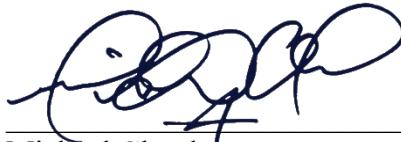
Sincerely,

  
James Comer  
Ranking Member  
Oversight and Reform Committee

  
Jody Hice  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Government Operations

  
Yvette Herrell  
Member of Congress

  
Glenn Grothman  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on National Security



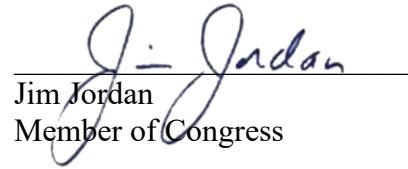
Michael Cloud  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Economic and  
Consumer Policy



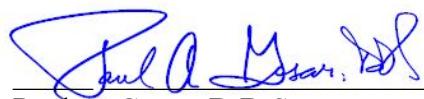
Ralph Norman  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Environment



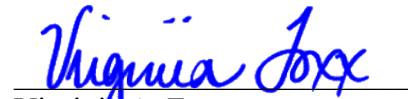
Pete Sessions  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Civil Rights and  
Civil Liberties



Jim Jordan  
Member of Congress



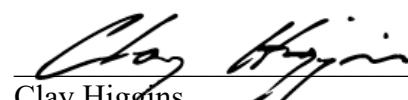
Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.  
Member of Congress



Virginia A. Foxx  
Member of Congress



Bob Gibbs  
Member of Congress



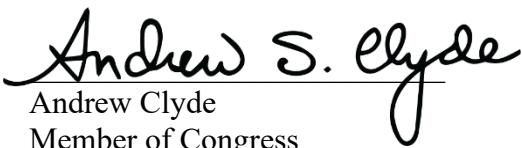
Clay Higgins  
Member of Congress



Fred Keller  
Member of Congress



Andy Biggs  
Member of Congress



Andrew Clyde  
Member of Congress



Nancy Mace  
Member of Congress



Scott Franklin  
Member of Congress



Jake LaTurner  
Member of Congress



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Pat Fallon  
Member of Congress



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Byron Donalds  
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Carolyn Maloney, Chairwoman  
Committee on Oversight and Reform

The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Government Operations

The Honorable Stephen F. Lynch, Chairman  
Subcommittee on National Security

The Honorable Raja Krishnamoorthi, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Economic and Consumer Policy

The Honorable Jamie Raskin, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

The Honorable Ro Khanna, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Environment



One Hundred Seventeenth Congress  
Committee on Homeland Security  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

February 2, 2021

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas  
Secretary  
Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

**RECEIVED**  
**By ESEC at 7:13 am, Feb 03, 2021**

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

It is imperative that the Department continue the steady progress on our border wall system, including projects that have already been funded. Securing the sovereignty and integrity of our territorial borders should not be controversial and was not previously when President Biden rightfully voted in favor of the construction of hundreds of miles of fence along the southwest border during his tenure in the Senate.

The border wall system's combination of physical barriers, all-weather patrol and access roads, lighting, enforcement cameras, sensors, and other 21<sup>st</sup> century technology is supported by the men and women of the United States Border Patrol, operating on the front lines of securing the border. Border wall system meets their mission requirements for impedance and denial capability, as well as the identification and classification of border breaches. Rolling back any progress on border security infrastructure will only make our southwest border less secure.

We are increasingly concerned about the intent behind Presidential Proclamation 10142 to stop wall system construction projects funded by direct Congressional appropriations. These funds were included as part of negotiated bipartisan appropriations packages under Congress's Article I authority. The suspension of these projects is an alarming overreach by the Biden Administration.

Weakening border security, especially during a pandemic, will only result in another humanitarian and national security crisis at the southwest border, fueled by these policy decisions.

To fully assess the impact of Proclamation 10142 and the planned actions on the border wall system, we request responses to the following in writing by February 15, 2021:

1. A breakdown of the estimated costs of pausing wall system construction and obligation of funds for 60 days.
2. The estimated costs of terminating or repurposing existing wall system construction contracts.

3. The legal basis for terminating and repurposing existing wall system projects that are under construction or that have been obligated.
4. Whether the Department intends to only terminate and repurpose physical barrier construction contracts, or also critical 21<sup>st</sup> century technology contracts that are part of the wall system program such as for the Linear Ground Detection System.
5. What the administration supports in place of physical barriers to address the impedance and denial requirement of the Border Patrol.
6. If you support the continued construction of all wall system miles that funding has been obligated for.
7. If you support the continued construction of all wall system miles in the pre-construction phase for which money has already been identified.
8. If you would support wall system construction if included by Congress in future appropriations bills.
9. If you plan to order the deconstruction of any miles of wall system along the southwest border.
10. A detailed accounting of all funds previously identified for wall system construction through Congressional appropriations or reprogrammed from other agencies for wall system constructions as of January 19, 2021, that will be reprogrammed for other purposes and how that money will be spent instead.

We encourage you to provide the requested information expeditiously so we can adequately assess the border security implications of such actions.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



JOHN KATKO  
Ranking Member

cc:

The Honorable Bennie G. Thompson  
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security



## OFFICE OF THE COUNTY JUDGE County of Hidalgo

RICHARD F. CORTEZ

County Judge

April 27, 2021

**RECEIVED**

*By ESEC External at 4:45 pm, Apr 27, 2021*

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas  
Secretary of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

I write to ask for your help on a matter of urgent public safety for the people of Hidalgo County involving the unsafe status of our levees.

To access the Southern Side of the levee in Hidalgo County to build the border wall, Customs and Border Protection contractors cut large holes in the levee. When the stop-work orders were issued earlier this year, those holes were left unfilled. A video showing the size of the problem has been forwarded to your office.

Should we have a flood event in Hidalgo County or upstream of the levee cut, this gap in the levee will result in severe flooding that can potentially take lives and destroy property. This result is entirely preventable, with your help. The physical cuts are located in Representative Cuellar's district; however, the individuals who may suffer from its devastation live throughout Hidalgo and Cameron Counties.

News reports suggest the White House is preparing to mobilize resources to fill holes and a gap resulting from the way border wall construction was halted. This gap in the Hidalgo County levee should be a top priority.

We need your help making sure this danger is addressed. My staff and I are available to discuss this situation with you at any time.

Respectfully,

Richard F. Cortez

County Judge

Hidalgo County, Texas

Cc: The Honorable David L. Fuentes, Hidalgo County Commissioner, Pct. 1  
The Honorable Eduardo "Eddie" Cantu, Hidalgo County Commissioner, Pct. 2  
The Honorable Everardo "Ever" Villarreal, Hidalgo County Commissioner, Pct. 3  
The Honorable Ellie Torres, Hidalgo County Commissioner, Pct. 4

**TO:** The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and The Honorable Lloyd Austin, Secretary of the Department of Defense

**FROM:** Defenders of Wildlife, Southern Border Communities Coalition, Center for Biological Diversity, Earthjustice, Sierra Club, and 67 other organizations\*

**RE:** Stopping the Wall: Criteria and Priority Areas for Conservation and Restoration

**DATE:** February 25, 2021

We are a broad coalition of organizations calling on the Biden-Harris Administration to:

- 1) Immediately cancel all border wall contracts and divert remaining funds to other purposes, including removing harmful wall sections and mitigating damage caused by the wall;
- 2) Take immediate action to restore fragile and ecologically sensitive areas that have been harmed by wall construction;
- 3) Remove wall segments that harm or threaten to harm people, communities, wildlife and/or the land, and remediate damages;
- 4) Move towards responsible, humane border management, and promote unity and harmony between Mexico and the United States;
- 5) Restore equal protection under the law to the borderlands.

Most Americans oppose the imposition of walls along the Mexico-U.S. border. Border walls and border wall construction cause immense harm to wildlife, private and public lands, and livelihoods of the people who live, work and recreate here. The devastation spans hundreds of

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\* This memorandum is endorsed by the following organizations: #NotAnotherFoot Coalition, 350 Central Mass, Animal Welfare Institute, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, Arizona Trail Association, Azul, Born Free USA, Center for Biological Diversity, Christian Council of Delmarva, Clean Water Action, Conservation Council For Hawaii, Covenant Tribal Solar Initiative, Defenders of Wildlife, Eagle Pass Border Coalition, Earth Island Institute, Earthjustice, Endangered Habitats League, Endangered Species Coalition, Environmental Protection Information Center, Friends of Mohawk Trail State Forest, Inc., Friends of Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks, Friends of the Earth U.S., Friends of the Sonoran Desert, Friends of the Wildlife Corridor, Great Old Broads for Wilderness, GreenLatinos, Greenvironment, LLC, Hands Across the River, Harambee House, inc/ Citizens For Environmental Justice, Heartwood, Hilltown Anti-Herbicide Coalition (HA-HC), Howling For Wolves, Indivisible Tohono, International Marine Mammal Project of Earth Island Institute, Madrean Archipelago Wildlife Center, National Parks Conservation Association, New Mexico Wildlife Federation, NM café, No Border Wall Coalition | Laredo, TX, Northern Jaguar Project, Ocean Conservation Research, Oceanic Preservation Society, OneNature, Partnership for the National Trails System, Predator Defense, Progress Arizona, ProgressNow New Mexico, Project Coyote, Rachel Carson Council, Raptors Are The Solution, RESTORE: The North Woods, Save Massachusetts Forests, Seven Circles Foundation, Sierra Club, Sky Island Alliance, Southern Border Communities Coalition, SouthWest Ecology & Economy Troop, SWEET, Southwest Environmental Center, The Borneo Project, The Enviro Show, The Lands Council, The Rewilding Institute, The Wilderness Society, Turtle Island Restoration Network, Washington Office on Latin America, Weeden Foundation, Wild Arizona, WildEarth Guardians, WILDERNESS & WILDLIFE, and the Wildlands Network.

miles of our region, a region that is culturally and biologically diverse, includes vibrant communities, [beautiful landscapes and rivers](#), and a large number of threatened and endangered species.

**Laws:** To facilitate wall construction, the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security waived eighty-four federal laws and statutes, plus all related state and local laws, that protect the environment, wildlife, religious freedom, historic and cultural sites and taxpayers' interest in responsible procurement. The administration can rescind those waivers with the stroke of a pen so that equal protection under the law will be restored for all future actions in the borderlands.

**Landscapes and wildlife:** These sensitive borderlands include deserts, mountains, rivers and streams, thorn scrub forests, and freshwater wetlands, and encompass some of our nation's most prized national wildlife refuges, forests, parks and wilderness areas.

**Cultural resources and communities:** Barrier construction has disturbed or destroyed indigenous graves and cultural sites and infringes on Native American sovereignty. Wall construction [destroys archaeological sites](#) and desecrates graves of the original inhabitants of the land. Border wall in Texas is disturbing and blocking burial grounds and cemeteries, one with Civil War, World War I and Korean War veterans.

### Criteria for Conservation and Restoration Priority Areas

We request that the Biden-Harris Administration stop and/or remove wall segments that cause or threaten to cause immediate harm to people, communities, wildlife and/or the land and remediate the damages. Any wall construction or existing wall that meets the criteria below should be stopped, removed, and remediated:

- **Disturbs sites with cultural or religious significance to Native Americans;**
- **Interferes with freedom of religion;**
- **Blocks important wildlife corridors, thereby hindering migration, genetic exchange and access to food and water;**
- **Interferes with local surface hydrology, by blocking rivers and streams; drying springs, ponds, and wetlands; or increasing risk of flood damage to natural drainages and communities;**
- **Harms the economy and quality of life of border communities, including municipalities that have passed resolutions against the wall;**

- **Impedes access to private residences, businesses, and farms and ranches, including leased property and dwellings, or harms viewsheds or property values, or causes loss of acreage;**
- **Impedes public access, use and enjoyment of rivers and other water bodies, public lands or other sites of common use and interest.**

### Remediation, Restoration and Mitigation Actions

- Immediate (in addition to cancelling all border wall contracts):
  - Permanently open all gates built into the border wall (e.g. flood gates at San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area) to facilitate natural flows of wildlife and water.
  - Ensure that all construction is stopped for lighting infrastructure, including arrays integrated into the wall and free-standing lighting installations near the wall.
  - Turn off border wall lighting where it interferes with the natural behavior of wildlife, negatively affects dark skies, or disturbs the viewshed of border communities.
  - Initiate meaningful consultation with border communities, especially Indigenous people.
  - Close and rehabilitate new roads plowed to border wall construction zones.
- Medium and longer-term:
  - Identify funding sources for wall removal, remediation and environmental mitigation.
  - Work with affected communities and land managers to plan remediation approaches, including but not limited to:
    - complete removal of walls
    - replacement of walls with vehicle barriers
    - revegetation of disturbed habitat
    - conservation of new habitat to offset habitat destroyed

### Priority Wall Segments for Cancellation, Removal and Remediation

We request that **all border wall contracts be immediately cancelled**, first and foremost. Due to the unprecedented secrecy and corruption under which the Trump Administration pursued these projects, we do not have updated status information on many of the border wall areas listed below. Some areas are already heavily impacted, and some have not yet seen

construction begin. Our coalition members are available to work with decision makers to connect you with impacted communities and provide the most updated information available for each area.

Below is a selection of border areas that fit the criteria outlined above. They are listed in a west-to-east direction, and as much information as we have available is provided regarding location, border wall segment names, construction status, and justification. An interactive map of the following locations can be found [here](#):

#### **California: Friendship Park, San Diego County**

Friendship Park is a meeting point for people to come together across borders to sing, worship, garden, fly kites, and make friends across political, societal, and other barriers, healing the wounds of separation. But [U.S. Customs and Border Protection \(CBP\) has begun to build more 30-foot walls through this space](#), which is already over-militarized with two separate border walls. The [Friends of Friendship Park](#) is a local, bi-national organization with years of experience working with local law enforcement, land management and community members to protect the park and its original purpose. They have worked with architects to propose alternative visions for the park that would enhance security, safety, and community participation and access to this one-of-a-kind bi-national space. We request that the Department of Homeland Security [contact Friends of Friendship Park](#) and work to help make this vision a reality.

Location: Western terminus of Mexico-U.S. border at Monument 258.

32.5345, -117.1227876

Wall segment: San Diego Secondary Wall Replacement

Status and source: Under construction ([CBP map](#)), pre-construction (on-the-ground reports), January, 2021.

#### **California: Otay Mountain Wilderness Area, San Diego County**

This segment is Quino checkerspot butterfly and Tecate cypress habitat on Bureau of Land Management lands. Walls imposed during the Bush and Trump Administrations have caused enormous erosion damage and have degraded the habitat of protected species. The wall curves dramatically into the U.S., leaving significant amounts of the United States stranded on the south side of the wall. The recently-constructed San Diego 4 double-wall is particularly harmful due to its extra-wide footprint and the fact that any wildlife seeking to cross through here must negotiate two walls instead of just one.

Location:

32.5588, -116.8412253 to 32.5558, -116.877792

Wall segments: San Diego 4 and Bush/Obama-era walls east of there.

Status and source: Under construction (San Diego 4), [CBP map](#) and on-the-ground reports, January, 2021. Older walls to the east complete.

**California: Jacumba Mountains Wilderness Area, Imperial County**

This segment is Peninsular bighorn sheep Designated Critical Habitat and is a Bureau of Land Management designated Wilderness Area. Walls have been recently completed through the Davies Valley of the Jacumba Mountains Wilderness. The design of these walls and associated roads are inadequate for allowing the natural passage of wildlife and water, which imperils the Peninsular bighorn sheep and flat-tailed horned lizard, both being protected species.

Location: 32.6315, -115.9389 to 32.6273 32.6273, -115.99381 (3.2 miles).

Wall segments: El Centro Project A:1

Status and source: Wall complete. 2021. (CBP map states 'complete')

**Arizona: Las Playas-Pinta Sands, Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge, Yuma and Pima Counties**

For thousands of years, people have been drawn to Las Playas as one of the few water sources in the region. Archaeologists have discovered 159 prehistoric sites in the area and discovered that the people of Las Playas produced jewelry from shells obtained from the shores of the Gulf of California. In the middle of the hot, dry desert lies Las Playas, a group of dry lake beds with no drainage outlets. When the rare rain falls in the central part of Cabeza Prieta, it flows into these ephemeral lakes, located next to the international boundary. When the playas are wet, the flora and fauna come to life and the playas become islands of emerald green. They host several plant and animal species that are rare in the U.S. or Sonoran Desert, including the federally endangered Sonoran pronghorn. Las Playas is a unique biological resource for species like the Endangered Sonoran pronghorn, which thrive on the abundant forage

El Gran Desierto de Altar is the largest active dune system in North America and is known for its magnificent star and crescent dunes. Most of the Gran Desierto is in Mexico but part of this system extends into the U.S. and is known as the Pinta Sands. Many species of plants and animals are found only in the Gran Desierto, including the fringe toed lizard, flat-tailed horned lizard, giant Spanish needles, and blue sand lily. Spectacular and vast fields of wildflowers bloom on the dunes after sufficient winter rains, in contrast with the drier, surrounding desert area.

Locations:

1. 32.0574, -113.391934 to 32.0891, -113.49264 (6.3 miles)
2. 32.1082, -113.5545661 to 32.1333, -113.6345603 (5.0 miles)

Wall segments: Yuma Project 3:1 and Yuma 3:4

Status and source: Under construction, [CBP map](#) and on-the-ground reports, January, 2021.

**Arizona: Sonoran Pronghorn Corridor, Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge, Yuma and Pima Counties**

This segment cuts across a historic and important seasonal migratory pathway for Sonoran pronghorn, a species protected under the Endangered Species Act. Fewer than 200 animals remain, and their ability to survive depends upon having large expanses of land in order to find sparse and sporadic water and forage in one of the hottest, driest places in North America. They range across nearly the entirety of the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge, Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument and across the Gran Desierto de Altar and Pinacare Reserves in Mexico. Their survival hinges upon being able to utilize their entire home range in both countries.

Location: 32.0090, -113.238 to 32.0300, -113.307 (4.3 miles)

Wall segment: Tucson Project 1:1

Status and source: Wall complete but with ongoing activity, on-the-ground reports, January, 2021. (CBP map states 'complete')

**Arizona: Quitobaquito Hills Spring Complex, Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, Pima County**

Quitobaquito has a deep cultural history. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its importance to our national cultural heritage. More than a dozen tribes claim cultural affiliation with the area. The land is scattered with ancient pottery, shells, and other artifacts and features; more items lie under the surface. Archaeologists have found that people lived at or passed through the springs for over eight thousand years. The site was an essential stop for prehistoric and historic Native Americans travelling between the Gulf of California and the interior U.S., carrying trade items. In recent years, O'odham tribal members have revived the traditional coming-of-age salt pilgrimage through Quitobaquito. The Hia-Ced O'odham had a settlement and burial ground at the site until the 1950s and continue to view the area as culturally important. Tribes continue to use Quitobaquito for ceremonies and use its plants for ceremonial and medicinal purposes. Some plants and animals occur nowhere else in the United States or the Sonoran Desert. Quitobaquito springs and pond are the only sites in the U.S. where the federally endangered Quitobaquito pup-fish and the rare Sonoyta mud turtle occur. The oases are within the historically occupied range and potential recovery habitat of the federally endangered Sonoran pronghorn.

Location: 31.9264, -112.9734923 to 31.9614, -113.0845572 (7 miles)

Wall segments: Tucson Project 1:1

Status and source: Wall complete but with ongoing activity, on-the-ground reports, January, 2021. (CBP map states 'complete')

**Arizona: Wildlife corridors in the Baboquivari Mountains and Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge, Pima County**

These two segments include the westernmost unit of Designated Critical Habitat for jaguar (the Southern Baboquivari subunit) and adjoins the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge. The Refuge was created in 1985 to protect and conserve the masked bobwhite quail, an endangered subspecies of the northern bobwhite quail. The refuge protects 115,000 acres of Sonoran Desert grassland and its associated native flora and fauna.

Location: 31.4936, -111.5779656 to 31.5014, -111.6023201 (1.5 miles)

31.4545, -111.4551452 to 31.4812, -111.5385726 (5.3 miles)

Wall segments: Tucson Projects C, C:1, C3 and C4.

Status and source: Under construction, on-the-ground reports, January, 2021.

**Arizona: Wildlife corridors in the Coronado National Forest, Santa Cruz County**

The Tumacacori Ecosystem Management Area of the Coronado National Forest (which encompasses the Pajarita Wilderness Area) is home to many threatened, endangered, and sensitive species, including Chiricahua leopard frog, northern Mexican garter snake, and Mexican long-tongued bat. There are over a dozen spring ecosystems identified for their conservation value that are located in close proximity to the U.S.-Mexico border including Alamo Spring, which provides habitat for sensitive species and drinking water to wide-ranging species in an otherwise arid environment. More information about springs in the area is available [here](#). Despite being the smallest Wilderness in the Coronado National Forest, the Pajarito Wilderness is home to an amazing diversity of species including more than 660 species of plants, 17 of which are found nowhere else on earth. The area's most prominent feature is Sycamore Canyon which is known for its diversity of plants, animals, and insects. Sycamore Canyon has been declared an Important Bird Area (IBA) by the National Audubon Society. California Gulch has also been declared an IBA. This canyon hosts a perennial spring-fed stream that drains into Mexico and supports multiple Species of Conservation Status. The Tumacacori Mountains (including the Tumacacori Inventoried Roadless Area) and Pajarita Mountains (including the Pajarita Wilderness) are contiguous with a larger wildland complex south of the border including the Sierra Cibuta, and a mega-complex of Madrean oak woodland and other high elevation wildlife habitat extending south into Mexico. The Tumacacori Ecosystem Management Area (EMA) contains some of the greatest concentration of diversity of species, especially subtropical species, on the Coronado National Forest. More information about the Tumacacori Ecosystem Management Area available [here](#).

Location: East segment: 31.3323, -111.0379652 to 31.3322, -111.0748724, to 31.3322, -111.0748724 to 31.3402, -111.0997557. (3.8 miles). A significant change in border angle occurs here, hence the multiple coordinates.

West segment: 31.3813, -111.2265168 to 31.3992, -111.2823082 (3.5 miles).

Wall segments: Tucson Projects B, B:1.

Status and source: Under construction, on-the-ground reports, January, 2021.

**Arizona: Santa Cruz River wildlife corridor in the Coronado National Forest, Santa Cruz County**

This segment includes the location where the Santa Cruz River enters the United States from Mexico. This area includes pedestrian border walls that were built in 2008 that extend from the Santa Cruz River to Nogales, 5 miles to the west. Another major drainage, Brickwood Creek, fed by the spring of the same name, provides perennial flow to the region, as compared to the often dry and ephemeral flows of the Santa Cruz River. As of January 20, 2021 wall construction was underway along the western edge of the Patagonia mountains in jaguar Critical Habitat. In addition to the current infrastructure being constructed east of the River, we recommend that entire 6.9 mile stretch of this critically important wildlife watering corridor, part of which extends 1.5 miles into the Patagonia Unit of jaguar Designated Critical Habitat, be removed and/or converted to vehicle barrier.

Wall segments: Tucson Projects B, B:5. Legacy barriers.

Status and source: Under construction, on-the-ground reports, January, 2021.

Location: 31.3336, -110.75303 to 31.3336, -110.8690195 (6.9 miles).

**Arizona: Wildlife corridor in the Coronado National Forest and Coronado National Memorial, Cochise County**

These segments include the southern terminus of the Arizona National Scenic Trail within Coronado National Memorial, where ongoing wall construction is destroying the scenic resources for which the trail was designated a National Scenic Trail by Congress, and blocking off the historic border monument located there.

This segment also includes the eastern unit of the Patagonia jaguar Designated Critical Habitat and is the corridor where jaguar and ocelot have been recorded since 2012 in Arizona, presumably crossing into Arizona from the breeding population 100 miles to the south in Sonora. Coronado National Memorial and the Huachuca Mountains directly connect to the Rancho Los Fresnos Preserve in Sonora, Mexico, which harbors beaver, black-tailed prairie dogs and the Threatened Chiricahua leopard frog. The Nature Conservancy purchased this property for the conservation of nature in the Borderlands.

A population of pronghorn antelope persist within the Huachuca Ecosystem Management Area of the Coronado National Forest and the San Rafael Ranch Natural Area, where wide roads have been bulldozed and bollards are being staged. This herd has extended its range 25 miles to the north, reaching the BLM managed Las Cienegas National Conservation Area. This area encompasses a broad diversity of habitat types and an array of imperiled species found nowhere else in the United States. The Huachuca and Patagonia Mountains provide one of the few, pine-oak woodland wildlife corridors in the Sky Islands that span the U.S. Mexico border

and link to protected natural areas in Sonora. Twenty-six populations of avian “species of conservation concern” can be found here. Some of these populations are only found in the United States in the borderland Sky Islands including Elegant Trogon, Whiskered Screech Owl, and Buff-Breasted Flycatcher. Also found in the Huachucas are rare neotropical species found only in the southernmost sky islands of the Coronado National Forest. These include Berylline Hummingbird, Blue-Throated Hummingbird, Violet Crowned Hummingbird, White-Eared Hummingbird, and Sulphur-Bellied Flycatcher. The Huachuca Mountain range supports the largest number of breeding pairs of Elegant Trogon and likely the largest population of Whiskered Screech Owl in the United States. Additional information on this area of the Coronado National Forest is [here](#). There are [3 well-surveyed springs in this area](#) in close proximity to the border, one of which, Yaqui Spring, was documented going dry in September of 2020 following the initiation of new intensive groundwater pumping for border wall construction in close proximity to the spring. In 200 days Sky Island Alliance documented 100 species of wildlife living in this area through their Border Wildlife Study, more info [here](#).

Location:

31.3339, -110.22412 to 31.3336, -110.29776 (4.4 miles).

Wall segments: Tucson ProjectB:6.

Status and source: Under construction, on-the-ground reports, January, 2021. (CBP map erroneously states 3:1 is ‘complete’)

#### **Arizona: San Pedro River, Cochise County**

The San Pedro River, commonly called the last free flowing river in Arizona, is a major wildlife corridor, now bisected by border-wall gates. The San Pedro Watershed with its 450 species of birds makes it one of the richest, most dense, and diverse inland bird populations in the United States. Nearly half of all birds known to regularly inhabit North America have been recorded within this region of Arizona; 90 species of mammals—a community unmatched anywhere north of the tropics and 80 species of reptiles and amphibians inhabit this ecoregion.

Endangered species of jaguar, ocelot, jaguarundi, Mexican gray wolf, Mexican spotted owl, Long-nosed bat, southwestern willow flycatchers, desert pupfish, Gila topminnows, northern Mexican garter snakes, and Huachuca water umbel. The San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area was the first conservation area of its kind in our country designated by Congress by Public Law 100-696. The American Bird Conservancy recognized the San Pedro River as its first Globally Important Bird Area. Wall construction will have impacts on water flow that can't be predicted with certainty; but, as this is a major corridor for daily and seasonal wildlife movements, the toll on wildlife populations and ecosystem integrity promises to be significant.

Location: 31.3342, -110.12216 to 31.3342, -110.152 (1.8 miles).

Wall segment: Tucson Project 3:2

Status and source: Under construction, on-the-ground reports, January, 2021. CBP map says 'complete.'

**Arizona: San Bernardino National Wildlife Refuge, Cochise County**

The 2,369-acre refuge lies along the international border with Mexico in southeast Arizona's Cochise County. It was established in 1982 to protect and implement the recovery of eight species of native fish in the Río Yaqui watershed, four of which are Threatened and Endangered, one of which includes the Yaqui catfish, which is the only catfish native to western North America. The San Bernardino ciénega, (Spanish for "wetland"), was historically the largest, most extensive wetland habitat in the region. The Refuge was severely impacted by border wall construction in 2019 and 2020 by groundwater pumping that extracted an estimated 770,000 gallons per day from the same artesian aquifer that feeds the wells and springs at the Refuge. In December 2019, Refuge Manager William Radke was relegated to telling colleagues that the falling water levels caused by border wall construction posed "the current greatest threat to endangered species in the southwest region." This large marsh serves as a migratory corridor for wildlife between the mountain ranges of Mexico to the Rocky Mountains of Arizona and New Mexico. Adjoining the San Bernardino NWR is the Slaughter Ranch, managed in perpetuity by the Johnson Historical Society and is a U.S. National Historic Landmark. The ranch also maintains "House Pond," the region's most famous wetland and the only known location for the endangered San Bernardino spring snail. The 30-foot border wall and its associated 400 high-intensity 500-watt light poles placed at 125 yard intervals along the 20-mile stretch of wall has turned the oasis into an industrial wasteland, casting aside decades of historical preservation and millions of dollars of foundation support to the wayside.

Location: 31.3338, -109.2304283 to 31.3340, -109.3031912 (4.3 miles).

Wall segment: Tucson Project 3:3

Status and source: Complete, [CBP map](#), on-the-ground reports, January, 2021

**Arizona and New Mexico: Wildlife corridor in the Peloncillo Mountains on the Arizona and New Mexico border, Cochise County, AZ and Hidalgo County, NM**

This wildlife corridor is important for jaguar movement and consists of specially designated Bureau of Land Management lands, including Guadalupe Canyon Wilderness Study Area and Guadalupe Canyon Outstanding Natural Area and Area of Critical Environmental Concern. The Peloncillo Mountains create a biological bridge between the Sierra Madre Occidental in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains. Far ranging species such as jaguar, and black bear used to be able to move along the Peloncillos from the mountains of Mexico north to the Gila River watershed. The most spectacular example of this connectivity was the jaguar photographed in the Forest in 1996. The large male spotted here is believed to have moved north from a population in Sonora. The bridge of the Peloncillos straddles the eastern edge of the Sonoran Desert and the

western edge of the Chihuahuan Desert, while the Animas Valley on its eastern side is the southwestern most extension of the Great Plains. Opening from the spine of the Peloncillo range south toward Mexico and Rio Bavispe, Clanton Canyon and Guadalupe Canyon contain excellent riparian habitat. These canyons support many species of concern, as well as the highest avian diversity in the state of New Mexico. Many species of butterflies, most famously the monarch, also travel the continental pathway of the Peloncillos between the tropical south and temperate north. More information on the Peloncillos is [here](#). There are very few mapped springs in this area, which makes even more important water sources like Guadalupe Canyon for wide-ranging wildlife and sensitive species like the Chiricahua Leopard frog and other amphibians that need to complete their life cycle in a water source.

Location: 31.3325, -109.050057 to 31.3330, -109.1261716 (4.5 miles)

Wall segment: Tucson Project A:5

Status and source: Under construction, on-the-ground reports, January, 2021 (missing from [CBP map](#))

#### **New Mexico Bootheel: Wildlife corridor in Hidalgo County, New Mexico**

This wildlife corridor is important for pronghorn, jaguar, and the only white-sided jackrabbit locale in the U.S. It is also a transborder migratory route for the Janos-Hidalgo international bison herd. The effect border wall here, in addition to its impact on regional wildlife, will be to push illegal traffic onto adjacent private lands that are much more difficult to patrol due to their mountainous terrain and difficulty of access.

Location: 31.3334, -108.47918 to 31.3335, -108.5773 (5.8 miles)

Wall segments: El Paso Project 2, El Paso 2, El Paso 8

Status and source: Under construction, [CBP map](#), January, 2021

#### **New Mexico: Chihuahuan Desert wildlife corridor in Luna County**

This 2-mile section of 30' pedestrian fencing cuts through the rugged Carrizalillo Hills, blocking the movement of wildlife between the Sierra Alto mountains in Mexico and the Cedar Mountains Wilderness Study Area and extensive surrounding BLM public lands in New Mexico. Species affected include mountain lions, bobcats, coyotes, javelina, gray foxes, badgers, mule deer and endangered Mexican gray wolves.

Location: 31.7837, -107.923202 to 31.7837, -107.963641 (2.4 miles)

Wall segment: El Paso Project B

Status and source: Under construction, [CBP map](#), January, 2021

#### **New Mexico: Chihuahuan Desert wildlife corridor in Luna and Doña Ana counties**

This 34.6-mile section of 30' pedestrian fencing blocks movement of wildlife between Mexico and the sky island mountain ranges of the Florida Mountains Wilderness Study Area and Organ

Mountains Desert Peaks National Monument in southern New Mexico. Species affected include pronghorn, mountain lions, bobcats, coyotes, javelina, gray foxes, badgers, mule deer and endangered Mexican gray wolves. We recommend beginning this process by removing walls or conversion to wildlife-friendly vehicle barriers.

Location: 31.7837, -106.982 to 31.7839, -107.4225611 (25.9 miles).

Wall segments: El Paso Projects 1, 2, B and C

Status and source: Complete, [CBP map](#), January, 2021

#### **Texas: Del Rio, Val Verde County**

This short in length, but imposingly tall piece of wall, is opposed by local residents and unnecessary. Doubling the height of the wall and adding cameras, sensors and floodlights is anticipated to have negative impacts on the viewshed and could harm the local economy.

Location: 29.345900, -100.945 to 29.3311, -100.913

Wall segment: Del Rio Project B:1

Status and source: Pre-construction, [CBP map](#), January, 2021

#### **Texas: Eagle Pass, Maverick County**

This short in length but imposing in height piece of wall is opposed by local residents and totally unnecessary. Doubling the height of the wall and adding cameras, sensors and floodlights is anticipated to have negative impacts on the viewshed and could harm the local economy. The construction of the replacement is ongoing.

Location: 28.702, -100.504997 to 28.7197, -100.50499

Wall segment: Del Rio Project A:1

Status and source: Under construction, on-the-ground report, January, 2021

#### **Texas: Laredo and surrounding area, Webb and Zapata Counties**

These very extensive walls are opposed by local residents and would cut the riverside community and surrounding areas off from their river access.

Location or wall segments: Laredo 7 and all wall projects extending through the City of Laredo and south

Status and source:

Laredo 7 - contract award scheduled for May 2021, Beehler Declaration, Aug, 2020, Sierra Club V Trump

City of Laredo and south - [contracts awarded](#), Aug, 2020

#### **Texas: Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge, El Morillo tract, Hidalgo County**

Construction here could cause serious flooding, redirect floodwaters from the Rio Grande into Mexico, prevent wildlife from escaping floods, as well as blocking wildlife movements and destroying protected habitat.

Location or wall segment name: RGV-03

Status and source: Under construction, on-the-ground reports, January, 2021. (The [CBP map](#) erroneously lists it as "Complete.")

**Texas: Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge, Starr County**

Consists of 2 short segments, both of which were built relatively quickly because they are in tracts of the Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge (LRGV NWR). The longer of the segments runs through the Arroyo Ramirez tract of the LRGV NWR, where it crosses the refuge tract's namesake arroyos. The shorter segment is entirely within the Las Ruinas tract of the LRGV NWR. Construction has already inflicted serious damage upon both, and both sections of wall intrude into the floodplain of the Rio Grande, which violates a U.S. treaty with Mexico. Arroyo Ramirez is designated critical habitat for listed endangered species. In addition, with heavy rain the space between bollards will clog with debris, backing up water that would otherwise drain into the Rio Grande, causing flooding and erosion.

Location or wall segment name: RGV-05

Status and source: Complete, [CBP map](#)

**Texas: Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge, Hidalgo County**

A portion of this border wall section bisects the Marinoff tract of the Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge (LRGV NWR). The LRGV NWR was established to create a wildlife corridor for federally endangered ocelots and jaguarundi (wild cats that are around the size of a bobcat) mostly paralleling the Rio Grande. Border walls are impenetrable to terrestrial animals with a girth greater than 4 inches, so this section effectively fragments habitat, cutting off animals from necessary food, water, and mates. The Marinoff tract of the LRGV NWR is immediately adjacent to Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge (on its west side) which Congress recognized as so environmentally important that border wall construction has been forbidden through Santa Ana. In an ecological sense the Marinoff tract functions as a part of Santa Ana.

Location or wall segment name: RGV-010

Status and source: Under construction, [CBP map](#) and on-the-ground observation (January, 2021)

**Texas: National Wildlife Refuge System lands in the Lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas**

These additional areas have some level of construction already taking place, though it varies by project. Wall contracts here should be immediately cancelled:

**Ranchito Wildlife Corridor, Lower Rio Grande National Wildlife Refuge (multiple units)**

Location or wall segment name: 26.007, -97.625 to 25.982, -97.616 (2.52 miles)

RGV-010

**Otha Holland Wildlife Corridor, Lower Rio Grande National Wildlife Refuge**

Location or wall segment name: 26.078, -97.880 to 26.084, -97.862 (1.40 miles)

RGV-02 and RGV-010.

**Santa Ana Wildlife Corridor, Lower Rio Grande National -Wildlife Refuge (multiple units)**

Location or wall segment name: 26.092, -98.239 to 26.08, -98.185 (3.84 miles)

RGV-04.

**La Joya Lake Wildlife Corridor, Lower Rio Grande National Wildlife Refuge (multiple units)**

Location or wall segment name: 26.239, -98.563 to 26.232, -98.475 (7.50 miles)

RGV-09.